

**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 302
Paso Robles, CA 93447-0302

Mr. Al Wright, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
1807 13th Street, Suite 103
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Wright and Board Members:

The San Luis Obispo County Cattlemen's Association in this letter is addressing preliminary agenda item #19 for the February 19, 2004 meeting of the Wildlife Conservation Board.

The San Luis Obispo County Cattlemen's Association is strongly opposed to the acquisition of the northern Chinincas Ranch by Fish & Game. Enclosed is the resolution that states some of the reasons for opposing this proposed action.

Simply stated, the continuing loss of working cattle ranches in California erodes the opportunity for this industry to remain viable.

Please do not contribute to the mounting financial difficulties of our local schools and county government by taking additional property tax base off the assessor's tax roll.

The stated need or desire for public access to this property is a negligible reason at best for this specific ranch. This will be addressed in the public hearing at the meeting.

The citizens of California and San Luis Obispo County would be best served by action other than fee title acquisition of this ranch.

Sincerely,


Roger Miller, President

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Resolution 2004-01

WHEREAS, the San Luis Obispo County Cattlemen's Association opposes working cattle ranches being acquired by public agencies, causing said working ranches to be removed from property tax rolls;

WHEREAS, in place of acquisitions by public agencies, the San Luis Obispo County Cattlemen's Association supports voluntary agricultural conservation easements being placed on working ranches to promote the protection of working ranch landscapes;

WHEREAS, the State of California Department of Fish & Game has suffered major reductions to its operating budget, significantly reducing the department's ability to properly manage its existing inventory of over one (1) million acres in the state;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the San Luis Obispo County Cattlemen's Association is strongly opposed to the California Department of Fish & Game acquiring working cattle ranches, specifically the Chimineas Ranch in San Luis Obispo County.

This resolution is unanimously passed by board vote, February 11, 2004.